MARYAM JAMEELAH

Modern Technology and the Dehumanization of Man

Modern Technology and the Dehumanization of Man

MARYAM JAMEELAH

CRESCENT PUBLISHING COMPANY

Price Rs. 5.00

Published by CRESCENT PUBLISHING CO
2034-35 QASIMJAN STREET, DELHI-110006 (INDIA
and printed at SHERWANI OFFSET PRINTERS, DELHI.
Cover printed at NEW DEER ART PRINTERS N. DELHI.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

INTRODUCING THE AUTHOR :

Maryam Jameelah was born in 1934 in New York at the hei ht of the Great Depression - a fourth-generation American of German-Jewish origin. She was reared in Westchester, one of the most prosperous and populated suburbs of New York and received a thoroughly secular American education at the local public schools. Always an above-average student, she soon became a passionate intellectual and insatiable bibliophile, hardly ever without a book in hand, her readings extending far beyond the requirements of the school curriculum. As she entered adolescence, she became intensely serious-minded, scorning all frivolities, which is very rare for an otherwise attractive young girl. Her main interests were religion, philosophy, history, anthropology, sociology and biology. The school and local community public libraries and later, the New York Public Library, became "her second home."

After her graduation from secondary school in the summer of 1952, she was admitted to New York University where she studied a general liberal arts programme. While at the university, she became severely ill in 1953, grew steadily worse and had to discontinue college two years later without earning any diploma, She was confined to private and public hospitals for two years (1957-1959) and only after her discharge, did she discover her facility for writing. Marmaduke Pickthall's translation of Quran and Allama Muhammad Asad's two books - his autobiographical *Road to Mecca* and *Islam at the Crossroads* ignited her interest in Islam and after correspondence with some prominent Muslims in Muslim lands and making intimate friends with some Muslim converts in New York, she embraced Islam at the Islamic Mission in Brooklyn, New York at the hand of Shaikh Daoud Ahmad Faisal, who then changed her name from Margaret Marcus to Maryam Jameelah.

During extensive correspondence with Muslims throughout the world and reading and making literary contributions to whatever Muslim periodicals were available in English, Maryam Jameelah became acquainted with the writings of Maulana Sayyid Abul Ala Maudoodi and so, beginning in December 1960, they exchanged letters regularly. In the spring of 1962, Maulana Maudoodi invited Maryam Jameelah to migrate to Pakistan and live as a member of his family in Lahore. Maryam Jameelah accepted the offer and a year later, married Mohammad Yusuf Khan, a whole-time worker for the Jama'at-e-Islami who later became the publisher of all her books. She subsequently became the mother of four children, living with her co-wife and her children in a large extended household of inlaws. Most unusual for a woman after marriage, she continued all her intellectual interests and literary activities; in fact, her most important writings were done during and inbetween pregnancies. She observes *Purdah* strictly.

Her hatred of atheism and materialiam in all its varied manifestations - past and present - is intense and in her restless quest for absolute, transcendental ideals, she upholds Islam as the most emotionally and intellectually satisfying explanation to the Ultimate Truth which alone gives life (and death) meaning, direction, purpose and value.

UMAR FARUQ KHAN

MODERN TECHNOLOGY AND THE DEHUMANIZATION OF MAN

Among the intelligentsia in every Muslim country it is the prevailing conviction that we must adopt wholesale and uncritically every aspect of modern science and technology if we are to compete successfully with the rest of the world. The professed aim of our governments is to promote economic development, industrialization and mechanization to eliminate poverty, disease and illiteracy and to facilitate a higher standard of living for the people. Many modern-educated Muslims will tell their more traditionally-minded brethren that we can become just as modern and up-to-date and still preserve a pure Islamic way of life. The purpose of this essay is to domonstrate the fallacy of this almost universally accepted delusion.

In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding, it must be made clear that Islam does not and cannot condemn progress in any genuine branch of knowledge, including science. The Quranic verses and Hadith, all praising the pursuit of knowledge and learning are beyond dispute. Therefore Islam does not and cannot condemn science on principle. Were Islam the dominant political, cultural and moral force in the world today as it was in the past, science there would certainly be, as well as progress in every other branch of knowledge bu. the innovations it introduced and the changes it brings about would be gradual and it would develop along totally different lines and put to entirely

different uses, in conformity to the spirit of our cultural values.

From the European Renaissance onwards to the present, the development of science in Europe and America was not only the direct product of Western materialists in their revolt against the authority of the Church but its most important, indispensable and powerful weapon as well. The theories of Copernicus (1473-1543) and Darwin (1809-1882), to take only two of many outstanding examples, were all used by the materialists against a theological view of the creation of the universe and life upon earth. As early as the thirteenth century, scientists like Roger Bacon (1210-1293) revolted against the religious world view and glorified the mechanized life :

> His writings are one long tirade against ignorance. He told his age it was ignorant, an incredibly bold thing to do. The peoples of the Middle Ages were passionately convinced of the wisdom, the completeness and finality of their beliefs and bitterly resented any criticism against them. Roger Bacon's writings were like a flash of light in profound darkness. "Cease to be ruled by dogmas and authorities !" he proclaimed. Look at the world ! Experiment ! Experiment ! Experiment !" was his motto. Four chief sources of ignorance he denounced; respect for authority, tradition, custom and "the proud unteachableness of our dispositions." Overcome these and a world of mechanical power and scientific miracles would open to mankind :
> ".... Machines for navigating are possible without rowers or sails so that great ships suited to river and ocean guided by one man may be borne with greater speed than if they were full of men. Likewise cars may be made so that without a draught animal, they move more speedily than the chariots

> of antiquity. And flying machines are possible so that a man may sit in the middle of some device by which artificial wings beat the air in the manner of a flying bird...."*

Francis Bacon (1561-1625) epitomized the scientific spirit of the modern age in his classic, *The New Atlantis.* An English ship lands upon a Utopian island in the remote Pacific whose chief pride is a great institution devoted to scientific research. The ruler conducts the travellers through this place, explaining, "The aim of our Foundation is the knowledge of the cause, effects and secret motions of the universe and the enlargement of the boundaries and power of human invention to make all things possible...." The mechanized society which characterizes all the industrialized countries of the world is only the tangible product of what materialistic philosophers of Europe had been preaching for many centuries.

Westerners view their civilization as superior to all others because they say that it has achieved more scientific and technological progress in a century than the rest of mankind in all previous ages combined. It is only because of the rule of materialism that modern science and technology are what they are today. It is the natural result of all the best minds and talents being concentrated on the single goal of achieving the maximum power, speed, efficiency, pleasure, comforts and conveniences in the shortest possible time. Non-European cultures, including Islamic civilization, never achieved this degree of

***A Short History of the World*, H. G. Wells, Watts & Co., London, 1929, pp. 200-201.

technological proficiency not because technology was ever rejected on principle, but because the best minds were diverted to other goals considered of greater value. It is a fact of life that if you want to achieve something badly enough and are willing to sacrifice and subordinate all other considerations, you will naturaly outstrip and excel all other peoples in this particular respect. Such is the case of modern Western civilization with respect to science and technology.

The dominant ideal of Western civilization since ancient Greece is that mankind can achieve perfect happiness, health, prosperity, beauty, justice and lasting peace through an intelligent, rational application of human reason unaided or sanctioned by any supernatural power. With the rejection of the Hereafter, Western man turned his undivided attention to the attainment of health, comfort, pleasure and prosperity. Nature was and still is viewed by scientists as an enemy to be conquered, dominated, exploited and manipulated to serve human ends. He is convinced that by clever manipulation of the natural elements, he will eventually demonstrate his total independence from any power higher than himself. Thus modern science is guided by no moral values but naked materialism and arrogance. This is also why what may appear to be beneficial superficially, because of the underlying motive, the whole branch of knowledge and its applications is contaminated with the same evil.

In fact, it might be said that the main reason why modern science never arose in Islamic civilization or any of the other

cultures of the East is precisely because their religious structures refused to regard nature as profane. The most basic reason is that neither in Islam, nor India nor China was the substance of nature so depleted of its sacramental and spiritual character nor was the intellectual dimensions of these cultural traditions so enfeebled as to enable a purely secular science of nature and a secular anti-religious philosophy to develop outside the matrix of traditional orthodoxy. Historic Islam is a perfect example of this truth and the fact that science and technology in its present form did not develop in its bosom is not a sign of decadence, as is claimed, but the refusal of Islam to consider any form of knowledge as purely secular and divorced from what it considered as the ultimate goal of human existence. By refusing to separate man and nature, Islam preserved an integrated view of the Universe and sees in the cosmic and natural order the flow of divine grace and blessings. Man in Islam seeks the transcendent and the supernatural, not against the background of a profane nature that is intrinsically opposed to the supernatural, but rather seeks to transcend nature and nature herself can be an aid in this process, providing man can learn to contemplate it, not as an independent domain of reality but as a mirror reflecting a higher reality, a vast panorama of symbols which speak to man and have meaning for him. Within Islamic civilization there were not one but many different sciences all integrated in a unified concept of knowledge. There were the juridical, social and theological sciences, there were the mystical and metaphysical ones all derived in their principles from the source of revelation which is the Quran. Then there have developed within Islamic civilization highly-developed philosophical, natural, medical and mathematical sciences which although benefiting greatly from Greek, Persian, Indian and Chinese learning and inventions, were all integrated into the Islamic world-view and totally Muslimized.*

*_The Encounter of Man and Nature_, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1968, pp. 94-9

The pursuit of knowledge within the historic civilization of Islam was never segmented or departmentalized like that of the West. Its religious world-view enabled Muslims to develop many sciences which exerted significant influence on Western science without disrupting the established order. Thus a scholar like Ibn Sina could achieve distinction equally as a physician and a philosopher. A monarch like Nasir-ud-din Tusi could also be the leading mathematician of his day and also the author of classic on Shi'ah theology and a treatise on mysticism. His student, Qubt ud-din Shirazi could be the first in the history of science to correctly explain the cause of the rainbow and then write a celebrated work on theology and mysticism. Al-Biruni, perhaps the most brilliant of all the Muslim scientists, also achieved equal renown as a mathematician, an astronomer, an explorer, an historian and through his exhaustive, accurate and objective study of the Hindus of India, an anthropologist as well. Ibn Khaldun, whose *Muqaddimah* won him acclaim in both East and West as the founder of the science of Sociology and historical philosophy, was also an eminent statesman, diplomat and judge. The ideal man of learning in Islamic culture was not the specialist but the *Hakim* or wise-man who encompasses within himself all the intellectual qualifications of the sage, scholar, philosopher, saint, medical healer and spiritual guide. If he happens to be a student, a diplomat, a traveller, a warrior or a wise merchant also, that too conforms to the Muslim concept of the ideal man for he is traditionally an itinerant person. The *Hakim* seldom chose to specialize for then he

would sacrifice knowledge in its total aspect. Although considerable progress in science, medicine and technology was achieved without which civilization as we know it could not exist, and experimentation in the research laboratory did take place, originality, innovations and change were never upheld as intrinsic virtues. The ideal of Islamic culture was not mechanical evolutionary progress but the permanent, immutable, transcendental, divinely-revealed moral, theological and spiritual values of the Quran and Sunnah. For this reason, a secularized concept of the natu al environment could never take root in the East as it did in the West. Creation could never be considered by learned Muslims as a specialized, segmented object of study isolated ftom all other branches of knowledge without any reference to the Creator. This is why it is unfair and misleading to judge the achievements of Muslim scientists according to the standards of present-day science. Muslim sciences should not be viewed by the scholar as a mere forerunner of modern science but as an *alternative*. The contemporary science of the West and the sciences developed by the Muslims are totally different nd conflict with each other in aims and ideals.

No single aspect of a culture, including science and technology, can be regarded objectively as "neutral" but rather they are totally dependent upon the set of ideals and values cherished by its members. That is why it is impossible to think that the concrete scientific achievements of Western civilization have no relevance to its basic intellectual character. If the roots of the tree are rotten, then the tree is rotten ; therefore all its fruits are rotten.

What historial factors enabled modern science and technology to develop as it did in the West?

The rise of a purely materialistic and quantitative science of nature in the West is due to deep-rooted historical causes and certain limitations in the theological formulations of Latin Christianity which at the moment of the weakening of faith, led to the divorce and hostility between science and religion. The unrestricted application of modern science in the West in the form of industrialism and technology, depend on the fact that *Christianity is a religion without a Sacred Law* or as the Muslims would put it, a *Shar'iah.* As Christianity became the religion of Western civilization, it incorporated Roman and even the common law of the Germanic barbarians into its structure and while the unity of medieval Christendom lasted, this secular law was given sanction by the Pope and St. Thomas Acquinas in his discussion of natural and divine law, but the fact remains that these secular laws, which governed the political, social and economic life of Western man, did not enjoy the same authority as divinely-revealed law. The lack of a sacred law in Christianity not only made social upheavals easier but also facilitated the destruction of the harmony between man and nature through its unrestricted, unlimited exploitation. The development of economics as an independent discipline whose subject is man considered solely as a being with material needs and wants, is a result of a situation in which there is no explicit religious instruction as to what man's rights and obligations are both towards nature and God. The very fact that there was not within Christendom a detailed divinely-inspired instruction about social structure and economic and political practices led, with a weakening of Christianity in the West, to economic abuses of technology and an accumulation of wealth and power which knew no bounds or limits. It also led to the creation of the modern civilization which has spread throughout the world and has brought about the crisis in

which the choice has often had to be made between annihilation and the abandoment of those values which give dignity, direction, meaning and purpose to human life.

Those for whom the terrestrial life of man is the ultimate end therefore believe it is worth preserving as long as possible at all costs, even if the price be the loss of the dignity which makes man human rather than animal or machine. Furthermore, when the immediate question of this alternative concerning war is not being considered, the focus of attention is turned to the peaceful applications of technology which is supposed to obliterate all misery on earth but which brings with it far greater problems than those it succeeds in solving. All those who cherish the spiritual values of Islam must dispel the prevailing illusion that purely economic goals are more important than anything else and that indefinite material progress should be the supreme aim of social and political organization.

Many people labour under the illusion that only war is evil and if it could be prevented, man, with his science and technology, could create a Paradise on earth. What is forgotten is that both in war and in peace, technological and industrial man is waging an incessant war against nature. Whether one pollutes the soil, water and air in a single nuclear bombing or does so with radioactive wastes over a quarter of a century, is only the difference in time. The net result is the same because in both instances, man is waging war against nature.

Perhaps the answer to the burning question of how to avoid war lies in coming to peace with nature. The preservation of human dignity in the face of the threat of total war and a reconciliation with nature depends in turn upon the rediscovery of the spiritual significance of nature. Today almost everyone living in the urbanized centres of the Western world today feels intuitively that life has been robbed of its meaning and much of this dissatisfaction is due to the creation of a totally artificial environment from which nature has been almost entirely excluded. Furthermore, even this secularized,

urbanized existence is itself menaced through pollution, over-population and depletion of natural resources through the very conquest of nature that has made it possible to develop so that the ecological and demographic crises brought about by modern industrialism and technology has become a matter of general concern. Western scientists and economists have long looked upon nature as something to be used, exploited and enjoyed to the fullest possible extent without feeling any sense of obligation and responsibility towards her. The destruction of the natural environment by technology has proceeded so far that less and less of its value remains—a predicament which has made many thoughtful people to become anxious and worried. The craze to dominate nature has led to the degradation of the conqueror and his very existence threatened. Practically the only protest against the unrestricted application of technology is that of the conservationists and other lovers of nature but their voice, although valuable, is limited in effectiveness because their arguments are taken as being sentimental rather than intellectual. Only rarely have exceptional scientists argued that the prevailing concept of the domination over nature is the usurpation of man's true role as the custodian and guardian of nature. The materialistic concept of nature combined with a lust for unlimited gain, makes ever greater demands upon an already depleted environment. In the end, we must assert with certainty that there is no peace possible among men unless there is peace and harmony with nature. And in order to have peace and harmony with nature, one must be in harmony and equilibrium with Heaven and ultimately with the Source and Origin of all things, peace with God and peace with all His creation.*

Western civilization is unparalleled by any other in the extent of its deadly destructiveness to the natural environment upon which the existence of man and all

**Ibid.*, pp. 17-19, 133-13[illegible].

other forms of life depend. Nowhere in the world is the devastation of nature more evident than in the United States of America:

> A love of the outdoors and its wild creatures has been an important part of our American heritage from the time when Catesby made the first paintings of American wildlife down to the present day when over twenty-five million people visited our national parks in 1947. Thoreau, Emerson, Walt Whitman, Melville, James Feminore Cooper, Jeffers, Beebe and a host of other writers have profoundly influenced our culture more than any other people except possibly the British. Today as we are caught in the grinding mesh of a mechanized civilization and the monotony of unrewarding tasks, we need as never before to turn to the healing hills and forests with their rich company of plants and animals.
> Yet we have neglected, abused and destroyed that heritage. Unfortunately, our forefathers, who some of us still pay homage in the meetings of the Daughters of the American Revolution, were one of the most destructive groups of men who ever raped the earth. They moved into one of the richest treasure-houses ever open to man—the North American continent—and turned it in a few decades into a shambles....
> Land was abandoned by the colonists on the eastern seaboard nearly as rapidly as it could be cleared. Thomas Jefferson was concerned about this destruction and wrote: "We can buy an acre of new land cheaper than we can manure an old one." In 1798, in order to save the soil of his plantations, George Washington decided to give up the cultivation of corn entirely and purchase his supplies from the outside.
> As seen by a traveller of 1796, "the whole countryside in Maryland is flat and sandy, wearing a most dreary aspect. Nothing is to be seen for miles together but extensive plains that have been worn out by the cultivation of cotton and tobacco The houses have gone to decay and as the land around them has worn out, the pioneers find it more to their advantage to move

on to another part of the country and clear a piece of rich virgin land than to attempt to reclaim theseexhausted plains. Rural Virginia is a scene of desolation that baffles description —farm after farm worn out, eroded soil, gullied hills so that scarcely an acre could be found fit for growing crops. In the midst of these plains are several very fine homes which shows that this country was once very different than it is now...."

In the tobacco and cotton-growing regions of the South, the planters seldom counted on a paying fertility lasting more than three or four years.... *

No other nation—with the possible exception of Russia and China, ever had such a large slice of continent to play with. No other nation, including Russia, ever enjoyed such wealth in natural resources. Looking from the Atlantic to the Pacific with thousands of miles between, there seemed to the pioneers no end. What if a forest was levelled here or a field eroded there ? Move on, young man, move on ! The great open spaces beckon ! If to the illusion of infinity be added to usual practices of an unprecedented ruthless Capitalism, we come close to the true answer why our national resources have been depleted so quickly. The lumber tycoons, and the other great exploiters among the pioneers have often been defended on the plea that after all, even though they were hard and merciless, they built up the country's prosperous industrial economy. What they really did was to tear down the continent.

American pioneer forest practice was: "Cut the trees down and then get out !" A forest was regarded by the pioneers like a mine to be exhausted and then abandoned. The vital equilibrium of soil and water was ignored. In 1828 President John Quincy Adams set aside 30,000 acres of virgin forest as a Government reserve. His successor, President Andrew Jackson, in the true spirit of the frontier, at once annulled

*_The Road to Survival_, William Vogt, William Sloane Associates Inc., New York, 1948, pp. 114-116, 130-131.

this act and threw the forests open to exploitation by the public.

Trees were very important to the earliest American settlers both positively and negatively. They furnished shelter, fuel and to a lesser extent, food. They harboured game. They made the colonial industries possible—lumber, ship building, naval stores and potash. Charcoal was also essential for the smelting of iron. On the other hand, the forest was a great impediment to agriculture. The colonial farmers first girdled the trees and then killed them. The underbrush was burned, the land rudely plowed and the wood then rolled into a pyre. Turning forests into crop lands required such hard labour that the forest came to be regarded as a hostile enemy to be killed as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Whole mountain ranges were burned off, though no farmlands were to be found there. Campfires ran riot. The white settlers watched the flames of a forest fire spreading with the same composure and satisfaction as they regarded a massacre of defenceless Indians. The American forest was devastated with two objectives which should not be confused ; the clearing of crop land for farming and the methods of the lumber industry as such. The former was a blind razing and burning. Fire the forest, mine the soil until its fertility was exhausted and then move on! Turpentine was bled from the pine trees by wasteful methods which soon killed the trees. Never mind, there were plenty more beyond ! When the lumbermen arrived with saw-mills, railroads and stores and assailed the forests, the economy of America boomed. The forests were annihilated and replaced with stumps, brush and fire. The Homestead policy, known as sturdy, rugged individualism, regarded the forest resources of the country merely as quick, commercial profit, rather than being acquired for sustained yield which was the original intention of the Founding Fathers.

Scores of species of valuable, irreplaceable wild life were ruthlessly exterminated. The last passenger pigeon died in a Cincinnati zoo cage in 1914, the sole survivor of the

most abundant and the most beautiful of all American game birds. Towards the end, a single season's slaughter by hunters in Michigan accounted for five million of these creatures. Recently, my friend, who is a naturalist and a wild life photographer, exhibited two films of countryside in Oregon. The first photos were taken in 1915 and showed a great watershed swarming with game birds and migratory waterfowl. The second film was taken twenty years later and showed the same area a biological desert devoid of trees, fresh water or even grass cover and utterly forsaken by the birds which originally nested there. The beaver builds his dams no more save in a very few protected localities. First among the natural resources to fall under American Capitalist enterprise were the fur-bearing animals. Business enterprise, with its thoroughness and unmatched efficiency, soon left it barren. By 1872 the great herds of wild buffalo which used to roam the plains in herds ten thousand strong, were nearly extinct. Under the combined forces of "progress" represented by the Union Pacific Railroad, the repeating rifle and the big game hunter, the American buffalo vanished, leaving only their hides in museums and their skulls to the mercy of the sun. One of the uses of the repeating rifle in the hands of the United States army during the 19th century was to slaughter as many of the wild buffalos as possible so that the livelihood of the plains Indians would be destroyed and they would have no choice but to surrender their lands to the whites or starve to death.

Thus primeval forest virgin soil and waving prairie grasses have given way to rapidly eroding fields, cash crops, harnessed polluted rivers spanned by steel bridges, tunneled barren mountains, oil fields, mines and roaring smoky cities. Beauty has been lost but we insist that "progress" has been gained.*

"The aboriginal American Indian saw in virgin

**Rich Land, Poor Land*, Stuart Chase, McGraw Hill Book Co., New York, 1936, pp. 36, 44-45, 122-123, 128-129, 222-223, 233.

nature, in forests, trees, rivers and sky, in birds and wild beasts, direct symbols of the spiritual world. For him, as for most other aboriginal peoples, nature was sacred and there was a definite disdain for the artificialities of sedentary life. The desperate struggle of the American Indian against the encroaching white man was not only for a living space but also for a sanctuary . . . ."*

> Most of the American Indian tribes were not nomadic savages but simple agrarians living in settled villages, tilling the soil and hunting and fishing to supplement their diet. They had a keen sense of dependence on the natural environment and an aversion to a needless waste and abuse of resources. They had no sense of private property in land ; the tribe and its subsistence formed their social and economic goals. The beasts and birds of North America upheld the continental equilibrium of nature because they were an unconscious part of it. The Indian stood aside. He was a man endowed with intelligence and tools but without machines to lend him arrogance. A sure instinct told him that it was wiser to work with the forces of nature rather than against them. That instinct, although battered by generations of defeat, humiliation, poverty and oppression, still survives.**

While Tecumseh (1768-1813), the great American-Indian freedom-fighter, was in the midst of his valiant struggle to preserve the hunting grounds of the mid-West on behalf of the tribes for their survival against encroaching white settlers, President Harrison refused to grant the natives any consideration. Tecumseh

*_Encounter of Man and Nature_, op. cit., p. 98.
**_Rich Land, Poor Land_, op. cit., p. 31.

then sent a complaint to the American War Department that the whites had driven his people from the Atlanic Coast and would shortly, if not stopped, push them into the Great Lakes. Some weeks later, in December 1810, referring to the North-West Territory which the Indians under the leadership of Tecumseh still held, President Harrison declared before the Indiana legislature:

"Is one of the fairest portions of the globe to remain in a state of nature, the habitat of a few wretched savages, when it is destined by Almighty God to support in comfort and prosperity, a large white population and to be the seat of Progress, Civilization, Science and the True Religion?"*

And what have the whites, armed with their technology, done to that "fairest portion of the globe?"

Scenery, like cotton, is a crop which cannot be enjoyed without expenditure of labour. People come from the great cities to the Rocky Mountains, the Great Lakes country of Michigan, the New England Coast, Florida, California and the Great Smokies to buy scenery as they buy any other commodity. The customers must be served. Although beautiful scenery is the resource base, unless strict laws are passed and enforced for its preservation, commercial interests will ruin the crop. I can show you a dozen spots about rural up-state New York which were once lovely with lake, hill, forest and meadow, now turned into a veritable slum, foul with bungalows, dance-halls, cabarets, twenty-foot lurid billboards advertising products ranging from tooth paste to whiskey, lunch-wagons and refreshment stands selling hot-dogs and hamburgers tastefully shaped like ice cream cones ! Without restrictive regulations, scenery is quickly reduced to shambles, game is

*_The Patriot Chiefs_ : A Chronicle of American Indian Resistance, Alvin M. Josephy, Viking Press, New York, 1961, 156-157.

killed off, streams are fished out, woods are burned down by careless campers. Nothing of value remains.*

"Without the New World on which to draw, the Industrial Revolution would have been a stunted dwarf. The foundation for the Industrial Revolution was laid in 1492. Population pressures in Europe continued to rise. It was soon discovered that it was easier and cheaper to export a 150-pound man than to import the hundreds of pounds of food needed to keep him alive for a year. Irish, Italians and Poles moved from the rural slums of Europe to the urban slums of America ; once here, most of them scrambled out without too much difficulty. Free land or the industries such as railroads dependent upon it, provided opportunities for almost anyone willing to work. Early in Queen Victoria's reign, much of the western world took on something of the aspect of a boom town. Speculators, entrepreneurs, made the wheels of industry spin faster and faster but it was the rich forests of New England, the prairie soils of Illinois, the red lands of Georgia that kept them from grinding to a halt. No wonder industrialized Great Britain so vigorously espoused Free-Trade ! She was a contented parasite drawing on the eroding hillsides of New England, Iowa, Maryland, of Argentine, South Africa, Australia and India. The famous steaks and chops of London's luxurious restaurants carried with them the soil's fertility of half the world. It is no exaggeration to claim that the present American standard of living was attained by the

permanent destruction of one-third of our top soil . . . Perhaps one of our most prodigal wastes is that of gasoline. Our country must import oil yet we Americans waste hundreds of thousands of gallons. We build into our automobiles more power and greater gas consumption than we need. We use the press and radio to push the sale of more cars. We drive them hundreds of millions of miles a year at top speed in pursuit of futility . . . . Had the parasite of European industrial development not been able to sink its proboscis deep into the lands of America, world-history would have been very different. Enormous populations in mega-cities, heavy industry, social and economic conflicts could not have developed into the great explosion of World War I and World War II."*

Massive urbanization and mechanization, far from bringing enrichment to mankind has in too many instances led to an impoverishment of life, both materially and spiritually, on an unprecedent scale.

> When the cities of America were new, they grew rapidly. Land was cheap and abundant, new buildings rose continuously and the population and economic output of urban regions increased. Eventually, however, all the land in the city centre was filled. A physical limit had heen reached, threatening to stop population and economic growth. The technological answer was the development of high-rise buildings, elevators and lifts which temporarily removed the shortage of land areas as a factor in suppressing growth. Then a new restraint appeared. Goods and workers could not move in and out of the dense centre city quickly enough. Again the solution was technological. A network of express-

**The Road to Survival*, op. cit., pp. 59-61, 66-69.

ways, mass transit systems and helicopter ports on the tops of the tallest buildings were constructed. The transportation limit was overcome, the buildings grew taller, the population increased. Now most of the larger U.S. cities have stopped growing. Of the ten largest, five—New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit and Baltimore, decreased in population from 1960-1970. Washington D. C. showed no change. Los Angeles, Houston, Dallas and Indianopolis continued to grow at least in part by annexing additional land. Prosperous people who have an economic choice are moving to the ever-expanding ring of suburbs around the cities. The central areas of these cities are characterised by noise, pollution, crime, drug-addiction, poverty, labour-strikes and breakdown of social services. The quality of life in the city-core has declined. Growth has been stopped in part by problems with no technical solutions.*

The Arab Muslims are often blamed by Western conservationists for creating the prevailing barren landscape of North Africa and South-West Asia. Zionists justify the aggressive acts of the state of Israel and the dispossession of the Palestinian Arabs by "making the desert bloom" and their much-publicized triumphs in agriculture. It is forgotten by Zionist-sympathizers that Israel today is one of the most highly-industrialized, densely populated and urbanized countries of the world and that less than five per-cent of the Jewish immigrants derive their livelihood from the soil. An Israeli anthropologist admits that the Muslim-Arabs lived in greater harmony with nature than the Israeli settlers who displaced them.

**The Limits to Growth*, Danella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, William W. Behrens, Universe Books, New York, 1972, pp. 149-150.

> In ancient times it was the primary duty of the government to keep the great rivers, such as the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates well-regulated, the canals in good repair and the adjoining lands adequately irrigated. The destruction of these public works by the Mongol invasions during the 13th century led to a general cultural decline. Small-scale irrigation, terracing, crop-rotation, resting the land once every so many years and fertilizing the soil with manure have been practiced in the East ever since the emergence of agriculture thousands of years ago. In the Middle East with its vast deserts and comparatively small stretches of fertile land, the people have always valued and guarded the soil that could yield crops. The proverbial barrenness of the Middle East with its wastage, deforestation, denudation of the top-soil and increase in aridity has been due mainly to the constant wars which throughout history have again and again destroyed its towns and villages and laid waste its fields and forests.*

And here is a poignant illustration of the reverence for nature expressed by the *beduin* of the North Arabian desert, who profess Islam, which is strikingly reminiscent of that of the American Indian.

> Every evening the Ruala tribe occupied new pastures—such as they were—farther north. The drought and famine they suffered in each of these camps was terrible. In the chieftain's household, the black slave, Mnahi, was in charge of rationing the water supply which was precious little. As with the water, so with the milk. Camels which on good pasture used to give between four and five quarts of milk a day now gave less than one. The herds of camels were a sorry sight, emaciated and covered with dust.
>
> I was talking with the tribesmen about certain grazing lands north east of us when my friend, Faris, who had overheard our

**Israel Between East and West*, Raphael Patai, Greenwood Publishing Westport, Connecticut, 1970 pp. 34-35.

conversation, said to me, "Let us go and explore this territory forbidden to us by hostile tribes so that we may reassure our people and give them hope. . . ."

This exploration which we then made—Faris, I and two slaves—had consequences we did not then anticipate.

The scenery changed almost immediately after we had passed into this enemy territory. White clouds sailed in the blue sky—a long-missed and promising sight for it was the first sign of rain we had seen for many months. Herbage was visibly thriving here, thicker, taller and there were flowers. The farther we advanced into the North and the uplands, the richer became the vegetation and many wild fowl and also some gazelles started up at our approach.

We stepped into a green sea of waving grass and flowers. The tall green blades of delicate grasses swept about our long robes and cloaks. Above us, a lark soared rapturously over a flowery hillside while at our feet the crickets chirped. In silent gratitude we stood knee-deep in this paradise.

Faris walked away, slipping his woollen robe from his shoulders. Then he stopped and contemplated this awe-inspiring steppe, the meadows over which brooded the peace of Arabia. His gaze swept this abundance—the promised land—which in his imagination he saw peopled by his tribe and their herds of camels. And then his head drooped. How can I express what passed through my mind as I looked upon the bowed figure amidst this verdure.

"Let Ismail live after thee !" he cried involuntarily. Faris was grieving for his people and the awful tragedy of the dying grasslands and the parched plains where his famished tribe was wandering. A slight shudder ran through his body; he dropped to his knees, buried his face into the sweet-smelling grass and stroked caressingly the beloved earth. "*Ya-ummi* !—my mother !" he cried out. This wilderness was his motherland, rich, beautiful, most dear, for he had never known cities.

Before we started homeward, Faris tore up bunches of grass

by the roots. Each one of us had to take back an armful of it to testify to the fertility of the land we had explored.
When we reached camp, we found hundreds of men seated cross-legged before the chieftain's tent—wild, dark, hungry-looking men with their long black plaits of hair showing beneath their headcloths. We spread out before them our silent witnesses—the bunches of grass, herbage and flowers which were no less precious for being withered. All night long people came even from the most distant camping places to see and touch them. They reverently fingered the long grasses with exclamations of joy and praise to God. Now and then one of them would hand a blade of grass to his neighbour who would then lift it to his lips with a murmur of "*Ya-hayat!* O life !"
Faris said: "Here are the proofs of rich life. Tell my tribesmen that we shall go on !"*

And from the opposite end of the cultural scale, the great saint and Turkish religious leader, Badee-uz-Zaman Said Nursi (1873-1960), who endured years of imprisonment and exile for his resistance to the Westernization imposed on his country by Ataturk, writes in his autobiographical papers :

Now I will tell you about an old memory and an unrecorded private part of my defence at the Eskisehir trial (1935). There I was asked : "What do you think of the Kemalist Republic?" My reply was : "Just before that trial in court and before my arrest, I was in seclusion meditating under the empty cupola of a tomb, giving drops of my soup and the last crumbs of my bread to the ants. When I was asked why I give my food to the ants, I answered : "Ants and bees are community-dwellers and this is my tribute to the marvellous social organization

Black Tents of Arabia, Carl R. Raswan, Little Brown & Co., Boston, 1935, pp. 80-82.

of these small creatures...."*

"Since the Middle East has contributed so much to Western civilization, perhaps it has some wisdom left over which we Westerners have not tapped or which we did learn long ago and then forgot. It is easy to forget basic principles of human behaviour at a time when technology is moving at a previously unheard-of pace and social devices are straining in vain to keep up with it. At such a time, the judgment of previous generations in older cultures goes unheeded because they are ignorant of the latest techniques. To refresh our knowledge of the basic truths about man's relation to man, we must turn our attention to a more stable society, the adjustment of which has long since been tested and solved, before it too falls into the industrial and technological whirlpool and starts floundering about even more desperately than our own."

"The first lesson that we learn is this : In any human society, all the goodwill and fine intentions in the world, all the most energetic efforts of the most gifted men will be utterly wasted if the system under which they live is wrong and they fail to change it in time before it is too late. What makes a system right or wrong? These are subjective words. Translated into scientific terms, they mean systems of human life built to remain in permanent equilibrium in contrast to those which fall into maladjustment easily through defective social mechanisms. The social mechanisms which keep societies

**Badee-u-Zaman Said Nursi of Turkey*, Talaba an-Nur, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1974, p. 54.

that have them in order so that their individual members enjoy the greatest possible measure of happiness, consist of paired balances and automatic controls which stop trouble in its tracts. When an individual misbehaves so that his acts endanger others, traditional sanctions are at once invoked against him and the disorder contained. Traditional Islamic societies in the Middle East were kept in equilibrium by a large number of these automatic controls. A striking instance is how little the traditional monarchies of Muslim nations in the past have interfered with the private lives of their citizens whose mutual relationships have been channelled through many other kinds of local authorities, notably the religious. Such institutions as the Sufi brotherhoods, the *Waqf*, the trade-guilds, the village-council, the tribe, the clan and the family are revealed to the anthropologist as precious mechanisms which kept Muslim societies on an even keel and which in the dreary process of mechanization should be preserved rather than discouraged and destroyed.

"If we study the details of Islamic laws and injunctions, we will soon see that these limit the individual only by denying him self-indulgence, extravagance and waste. Analyzing it as objectively as possible for American anthropologist, the keynote to the Islamic way of life is that it provided a maximum goodness for human beings living in the crowded environment of the Middle East to a progressively deteriorating landscape.

"An interesting item to study in this connection is veiling of women. In Iran, women used to wear

the *chuddar*, the semi-circle of cloth which could be so draped as to cover the entire body except for the eyes. Many still wear them. These *chuddars* all look more or less alike. An attractive young girl can go out in the streets in a *chuddar* without drawing attenticn which might lead to trouble for herself, her husband or her parents. Marital arrangements in Islamic societies do not depend on chance meetings in the street, as is often the case in the West, but upon careful negotiations between families. At the same time a middle-aged lady, whose clothing is threadbare, can appear in a similar *chuddar* and feel no shame while a wealthy woman will have no opportunity to display her finery and excite envy. The *chuddar* is thus a great social leveller, extremely useful in a land of overpopulation and potential social tension. In Arab lands, women used to disguise their figures in similar fashion.

"One more example of Muslim sagacity may be seen in their ability to live gracefully with little furniture. The old-fashioned Arab or Persian removes his shoes when he enters a room, leaving them at the door. He can do this simply and unostentatiously because his footgear has been designed for this purpose. Thus he will neither wear out the rugs or trample them with mud. In the interior of a Muslim's home enclosed by bare white walls and roofed by a lofty ceiling, an Oriental rug is a thing of beauty. In a Western drawing-room, whose walls are covered with paper printed in loud designs, whose ceiling is low and whose floor is cluttered with chairs, tables, radio cabinets and sofas, such a rug is wasted. Wool for rugs in the Middle East is cheap and locally produced. Wood for

tables, chairs and beds, is expensive, scarce and most of it must be imported. Rugs, mats and cushions give rest to the weary and chairs and beds are not needed. One can feel just as comfortable and be just as dignified on the floor as in a chair. If a King or Khalif sits squatting on a rug, he is not doing anything which his humblest subject, equipped with a reed mat of his own plaiting, cannot also do. When the King or Sultan prepares for a meal, he washes his hands first. This again is something that his poorest subject can afford to do and in a society whose eating habits were developed before the germ-theory was discovered, it shows considerable hygienic wisdom. Once his hands are clean, the host can serve food to his guests with his fingers with little fear of contamination. Performed in an atmosphere of dignity, warmth and intimacy, this simple and personal act builds bonds between the men eating from the single common bowl which can never be forged over the Western banquet table.

"Thus Islamic civilization anticipated in many ways the human brotherhood and the One World for which we now yearn for—a world in which the only passport and visa that a human being needs to travel from place to place or to buy or sell his merchandise is his quality of being human, in which tribal and central governments exist only to keep the peace, in which travellers and wandering students are welcomed, sheltered and fed *gratis* along their way, in which education is free and most honoured and valuable possession which a man can attain is wisdom. If we in the West can once more on a larger scale achieve these things, we will have them derived profit from this

civilization built upon austerity."*

One of the most dehumanizing aspects of our technological civilization are the mass-media—cinema, television and radio—which in their soul-destroying commercialism, degrade and impoverish all human relationships. Writes a well-known American newspaper reporter for *The New York Times* in recailing her childhood during the 1920's :

> I liked our dining room better than any other part of the house. It was the one spot we gathered at least long enough to eat. Our family possessed much of the spirit of the popular song, "You Can't Take it with You!"—each one rushing off in his own frantic direction. Meals were usually accompanied by the radio's full blast. Almost every room, except the bathrooms, boasted a radio. "What, no radio ?" we exclaimed to my little sister Sally, when she became old enough to listen to her own type of programmes and then we went out and bought her a small radio.**

A well-known Pakistani politician describes the rich cultural atmosphere in the home of her girlhood (about 1928) prior to the introduction of the mass-media there:

> Although Muslim girls rarely received higher-education in the formal sense, those who had a literary bent and wanted to, did acquire a wide knowledge of poetry, literature and history. This was possible because their homes possessed such an atmosphere that they learnt just by living in the midst of it. For poetry was the breath of our cultural life and literary discussions were the accepted and established way of spending leisure time

**Caravan* : The Story of Middle East, Carleton S. Coon, Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1951, pp. 342-350.

***Fight Against Fears* : the Story of my Psychoanalysis, Lucy Freeman, Pocket Books, New York, 1951, p. 145.

among the educated. In every family, there would be at least one or two women poets. Fathers, brothers, and other male relatives were always ready to encourage this by patiently explaining difficult passages or lending the latest book of poems or criticism so that it is not difficult for girls to develop literary taste. It was in this manner that I myself pursued my studies. In fact, we knew and certainly had read a great deal more thoroughly than young people do now because reading is no longer the sole recreation for children. Radio and cinema now claim much of their leisure and even those few who do read, do not achieve the same mastery over literature—whether in Urdu or in English—because they rarely read a book twice while we chewed and digested it so that it became part of our thinking and our imagination and we lived for days and months in the world created by the magic of the author's pen.

Most of the reading I did on my own but whenever my father had the time, he asked me to read aloud while he and my mother listened. I remember those evenings so well. We would be sitting in the garden ; the air would be filled with the heavy fragrance of *Mogra* flowers, mixing with the clean fresh smell of new earthenware water jugs. My mother would be reclining on a *charpoy* twisting *Mogra* flowers to wear round her hair and on her wrists and my father and brother sitting on the wicker chairs. There would be enough light to read by and as the shadows fell, an oil lamp would be placed on a table which would throw sufficient light on the book and yet not break the magic of the twilight. My father would be listening carefully, correcting my pronunciation and explaining the meaning of words I did not know. A lively discussion would follow on the merits of the book. Such quiet and happy evenings are a thing of the past. Addiction to radio, television and cinema on the part of the children and a much heavier round of social activities on the part of the parents have put an end to it.*

**From Purdah to Parliament*, Begum Shaista Ikramullah, Cresset Press, London, 1963, pp. 29-30.

The mass-media not only spread corruption and amorality in the name of "entertainment" to the most remote village but it is the greatest enemy of religion, art and culture and unsurpassed by any other institution in history in its effectiveness of converting people everywhere to the materialistic outlook on life.

Depersonalization through the mass-media is not a grim, deliberate or coercive process. It is induced by economic and sensual rewards and not experienced by the listeners and viewers as dehumanization at all though the symptoms are clearly visible. Most of the people who are nourished by the pap of the mass-media, never had solid food on which to cut their teeth. They feel vaguely restless and dissatisfied but do not know what they are pining for and could not chew or digest it if they had it. Now let us view the consequences of this mass recreation—radio, television and cinema.

Producers of films, radio and television programmes do not deliberately seek to lower the taste of their fare. They seek to provide for a model "average" of tastes which through advertising, they try to make as close as possible to the mean average. Consumers of the mass-media are treated as a crowd in the sense that their individual tastes are not catered to. In the attempt to satisfy all (or at least as many as possible), individual tastes it cannot help but violate others, for there is really no such thing as an "average person" with "average tastes." Averages are but statistical composites. A radio or television programme while reflecting nearly everybody's taste to some extent, rarely satisfies anybody's taste completely. In this sense, the individual's taste is debased.

The very nature of the mass-media excludes art and requires it to be replaced by popular mass-culture. Standards of the films and radio and television programmes are subject only to the requirements of entertainment. What is deemed "correct" is merely what pleases most of the audience. They sanction whatever does not upset or offend the audience and

nothing else. By its very nature, the mass-media must exclude the genuinely beautiful and artistic (except occasionally the classics), for art is bound to differ from the customary moral and aesthetic view, at least as it takes shape in the minds of the audience. When filmed or broadcast, the creations of the playwright or novelist cannot deviate from the accepted standards and they must be entertaining and conform to the taste of the audience—*they can never form it.*

High culture in our civilization was cultivated in special institutions—courts, monasteries, churches, unversities, by the elite of society who devoted their lives in patronizing the arts and were neither isolated nor surrounded by the masses demanding entertainment. There was no need and no temptation for the artist to do anything but to create beauty on his own terms. The relations between the artists and the public were so personal that one can hardly speak of an impersonal market in which one sold and the other bought entertainment and recreation. In both high and folk culture, before the introduction of the mass-media, each was an autonomous universe, be it the court or the village, and relied on the particular cultivators and inventors of its arts and sciences no less than the latter relied on their patrons. Whatever the patron's tastes and demands, they were personal and not "average" tastes or demands. Folk culture of the peasant village also developed without professional or commercial help. Both high culture and folk culture grew from within the intimate close-knit groups and remained within them.

High culture was entirely dominated by an elite who with their much higher than average prestige, power and income dominated politics and society in general. This elite also determined what was to be produced culturally.

With the industrial revolution and the introduction of the mass-media, the elite as a group lost its power. The great mass of consumers now determined what was to be produced. One can now only become a member of the elite by producing the goods which sell best. With respect to culture, the elite

neither imposes any taste nor cultivates one of its own. It merely markets and helps "homogenize" and then distribute popular culture—which appeals to the "average" of taste, through the mass-media. The impact of mobility and the methods of mass-production and mechanized communication have caused the power of individual consumers to wane. But the power of the consumers as a crowd has risen and that of the producers as a group has dwindled.

With the invention of the mass-media, a mass-market for culture became possible. The same economy that mass-produces automobiles indulges in the mass-production of entertainment. Producers of popular culture supply this new mass-market. Popular culture does not grow within a group. It is manufactured by one group—such as Hollywood—for sale to an anonymous mass market and thus it must lose in spontaneity and individuality what it gains in accessibility and cheapness. The creators of popular culture sell entertainment and produce with sales always in mind. The artist who attempts to create art in its true sense is no longer insulated from the demands of the mass-market by an educated, cultivated elite and there are no longer stable, isolated peasant villages in which folk culture could grow.

Today's movie producer, singer or writer is less dependent on the taste of the individual customer, village or court than was the artist of yesterday, but he does depend far more on the average of tastes and he can influence it much less. He need not cater to any individual taste—not even his own. He caters to an impersonal market. He is not involved in a conversation. He is like a speaker addressing a mass meeting and attempting to curry its favour.

All the mass-media in the end alienate people from personal experiences and intensify their emotional and moral isolation from each other, from real-life experiences and from themselves. One may turn to the mass-media when lonely or bored. But addiction to radio, television and cinema, once they become a habit, increasingly impair the capacity of the individual for meaningful experience. The dependence on the

mass-media feeds on itself, establishing a vicious circle as much as other addictions do.

The mass-media do not physically replace individual activities and contacts—excursions, travel, parties—but they impinge upon all. The portable transister radio is taken everywhere —from the park, seashore to mountain-top—and everywhere it isolates the listener from his surroundings, from other people and from himself. Furthermore, it is beyond our individual power to escape from the noise. Canned music is piped into restaurants, shops, cafes, hotel lobbies and public means of transportation, even taxis. You can turn off your radio but not your neighbour's nor can you silence his transister or the television set in the restaurant. Fortunately, most modern people do not seem to miss the privacy of their thoughts, the cost of which is even more beyond the average income than the cost of individuality. The constant announcements, arpeggios, croonings, sobs, bellows, brayings and jingles, draw us to some faraway world at large and by weakening our ties with our immediate suroundings, makes us feel lonely when in a crowd and crowded even when alone. Whatever the quality of the particular radio or television programme, the very fact that one after the other they must be absorbed continuously, indiscriminately and casually, trivializes all. Even the most profound of experiences, articulated too often on the same level, is reduced to a cliche. The impact of each of the offerings of radio and television is thus weakened by the programme which precedes and follows it. But the impact of the stream of all mass-media offerings, whatever their quality, is cumulative and strong. It progressively lessens the person's capacity to experience life itself. Genuine art deepens the perception of reality but popular culture veils it, diverts from it and eventually becomes an insurmountable obstacle to experiencing it. It is not so much an escape from life but an invasion of life first and ultimately evasion altogether.

Mothers, well knowing that the mass-media can absorb energy, often lighten the drudgery of restraining the mischievous

activities of their children by permitting them to enjoy the vicarious experiences on the television screen. Television tranquillizes children by means of substitute gratifications for real experience. Manufactured activities and plots are offered to kill the child's hunger for experiencing life. They effectively neutralize initiative and pervert the imagination. But the early introduction of de-individualized characters and situations, offers no satisfying models on which to cast their imagination. What is wrong with the violence of the mass-media is not that it is violence but that it is not art—that it is meaningless violence which thrills but does not gratify the emotions. The violence and desire to experience life and its meaning is displaced and appears as a desire for meaningless violence. But the violence which is ceaselessly supplied by the mass-media cannot ultimately gratify because it does not satisfy the repressed emotions.

Why are the vicarious experiences offered by the mass-media so spurious and unsatisfying? Genuine act discovers and awakens the sleeper. Art intensifies and deepens perception and sharpens our experiences of the world and of ourselves. Artistic revelation need not be concerned with social problems. It may be purely aesthetic. But it can never be a pure illusion if it is art. Far from distracting from reality, art is a form of reality which strips life of the superfluous and extraneous and lays bare its essentials, permitting us in the most profound way to experience them. Because popular mass-culture is an illusion, it falls short of emotional gratification, detracting from life and from real gratification. Yet substitute gratifications, habitually resorted to, incapacitate the individual for real ones. It may seem paradoxical to describe mass-popular culture in terms of emotional repression. Far from repressed, it first strikes one as utterly uninhibited. Yet the seeming paradox disappears if we assume that the uproarious din, the raucous noise and the shouting, screaming and sobbing, are attempts to drown out the shriek of unused human capacities, of repressed individuality as it is crippled into futility and meaninglessness.

The television drama may message the tear-ducts and thrills are producėd by the mechanized assaults on the centres of sensation. We are diverted temporarily and in the end, emotionally exhausted but not satisfied. Direct manipulation of the emotions can relieve tension as does masturbation but like masturbation, it is a very poor substitute for the real thing. It does not involve reality but counterfeits it. Sensations and emotions directly stimulated and discharged without being sifted through the intellect are debasing because they do not involve the whole individual in his relation to real-life experiences. When one becomes habituated to ignoring reality and individuality in favour of meaningless excitement, ultimate emotional gratification becomes impossible

Once our fundamental impulses and instincts are thwarted beyond retrieving, once they are so deeply repressed that no awareness is left of their aims ; once the yearning for a life with meaning has been lost as well as the capacity to experience it, only a void remains. Life fades into tedium and diversion, however frantic, can relieve it only temporarily but never overcome the boredom which stems from nonfulfilment. Though the bored person hungers for things to happen to him, the tragedy is that when they do, he empties them of the very meaning for which he unconsciously yearns for by using them as mere distractions. In popular culture, even the Second Coming of Jesus Christ would be just another barren "thrill" to be watched on television until the comedian, Milton Berle, comes on. No distraction, entertainment or recreation of radio, television or cinema can cure boredom just as the company of the bored cannot relieve the empty feeling of loneliness. The bored person is lonely for himself, not as he thinks, for others. He misses the individuality, the capacity for experience from which addiction to the mass-media has deprived him. Hence his sufferings are unrelieved and his yearning for emotional satisfaction remains insatiable. Whatever the formula, nothing can be more tiresome and boring than the cheerless pursuit of pleasure and happiness. Days pass

slowly when they are empty ; one cannot distinguish one from the other. And yet the years go by swiftly. When time is endlessly killed by the mass-media, one lives in an endless present until one's life comes to an end without ever having, been lived, leaving the victim to exclaim : 'I have wasted time and now doth time waste me...."*

Art and present-day technology are intrinsically opposed to each other and the all-encompassing impact of the mechanical accounts for the reasons why modern civilization is so barren aesthetically.

Traditional literary and artistic standards have always placed high value on permanence, uniqueness and enduring universal value of artistic creation. Such aesthetic standards were appropriate in a world of handicraft and relatively small-sale taste-forming elites. These same standards in no way enable one to adequately relate to our present situation in which astronomical quantities of goods are mass-produced, distributed and consumed which are in varying degrees all expendable, replaceable, and lack any unique value or intrinsic truth. Thus today's artists neither work for a tiny cultured elite or take seriously the idea that permanence is any virtue. The future of art no longer lies with the creation of enduring masterpieces. Rather, modern artists work only for the short-term. Accelerated changes in present-day life brought about by technological progress require an array of symbolic images of man which will match the demands of constant change, fleeting impressions and a high rate of obsolescence.

Many artists today are working with engineers and scientists in the hope of exploiting the latest technological processes for their own purposes, symbolizing the gigantic technical thrust into society. Speed has become the norm, constant movement

*_Mass Culture_, edited by Bernard Rosenberg and David White, The Free Press, Glencoe, Illinois, 1957.

during every minute of experience and it is the task of modern artists to create this new reality.

Thus we find artists from France, England, the United States, Sweden, Israel and elsewhere creating kinetic images. Their creed is perhaps best expressed by the Israeli artist, Yaakov Agam who says : "We are different from what we were three moments ago and in three minutes more we will again be different. I try to give this approach a plastic expression by creating a visual form that doesn't exist. In kinetic modern art, the image appears and disappears but nothing is retained. The final culmination of such efforts is the creation of new centers of entertainment known as "fun-palaces" where the total environment changes continually. At these nightclubs, the pleasure-seeker plunges into a space in which lights. colours and sounds change their patterns constantly. In effect, the patron steps inside a work of kinetic art.

The most famous of these fun-palaces, the *Cerebrum*—is located in lower Manhattan. For an hourly fee, the guests are admitted into a white high-ceilinged room. There they strip off their clothing, don semi-transparent robes, sprawl comfortably on richly padded white platforms. Attractive male and female "guides", similarly nude, offer each guest a stereophonic headset, a see-through mask, to view from time to time balloons, kaleidoscopes, tambourines, plastic pillows, mirrors, pieces of crystal, marshmellows, slides and slide projectors. Rock n'roll music, interspersed with snatches of television commercials, and street noises fill the ears. Bubbles drift down from machines on the ceiling. Hostesses float through, spraying the guests with a variety of fragrant perfumes. As the music grows more excited, guests and guides begin to dance on the platform and the carpeted walkways that connect them. Lights constantly change colour and random images wrap themselves around the walls, guests and guides. The mood shifts from cool at first, to warm and friendly and then erotic. Whether one regards this as fun or not depends on the individual, but the over-all direction is clear. In art as in

everything else, modern man is racing towards impermanence. Man's relationships with symbolic imagery are growing more and more temporary.*

The puritanical values of Islamic culture regard with disdain organized recreation and entertainment perhaps more than any other known historic or pre-historic society. The devout Muslim's attitude towards life is serious and sober and the teachings of Islam place their emphasis upon the faithful discharge of one's duties to God and to one's fellow man rather than the right to leisure. Recreation for the devout Muslim is simple, informal, personal, inexpensive and not excessively time-consuming. This may include such innocent pleasures as sitting in the garden enjoying the fragrance of the flowers, frolic with one's wives and children, conversation with congenial friends of the same sex on subjects of common interest, story-telling, poetry-recitations etc. Although during the darker periods of Muslim history, some voluptuous monarchs and a few rich epicurians in the cities indulged in wine-drinking and employed singing and dancing girls, entertainment never became in Muslim culture, the gigantic enterprise that it is today.

The extraordinary mobility brought about by urbanization and mechanization has resulted in that unique product of super-industrial society—the modern nomad—who has no enduring ties with any place or any people, including his blood-kin. In the process of mechanized mobility, the family is shattered to bits and the integrity of all human relationships broken.

**Future Shock*, Alvin Toffler, Bantam Book, New York, 1970, pp. 175-177, 229.

Here is how one young American house-wife, a veteran of eleven moves in the past seventeen years, describes the process : "When you live in a mobile neighbourhood, you see endless changes taking place. One day a new postman delivers the mail. A few weeks later, the girl at the check-out counter of the supermarket disappears and a new one takes her place. Next thing you know, the mechanic at the gas station is replaced. Meanwhile a neighbour next door moves out and a new family moves in. These changes are taking place all the time. When you move to another city, you break all these ties at once and you have to start life all over again. You have to find a new pediatrician, a new dentist, a new car mechanic who won't cheat you and you quit all your organizations and start anew. It is the simultaneous rupture of a whole range of existing human relationships that makes repeated job-relocation a great psychological strain for many. The more frequently this cycle of job relocation and moving occurs in the life of the individual, the shorter the duration of the human relationships involved.

Among significant sectors of the population, this process of repeated moving from one city to another is now occurring so rapidly that it is totally devastating to all ties to people and places. The knowledge that no move is final and that one will have to change jobs soon and be again relocated works against the development of enduring human relationships. Each time the nuclear-family moves, it also tends to slough off a large number of relations, friends and acquaintances. Separation does not always end all relationships immediately. At first there may be an eager flurry of letters back and forth. There may be occasional visits or telephone calls. But gradually these decrease in frequency and finally stop. With each move there is a deadly attrition. Indeed much of the social activity of individuals today can be described as search-behaviour—a relentless process of social exploration in which one seeks out new friends to replace those who are either no longer present or who no longer share the same interests. And the interests of mobile people in the modern world,

subjected to increasing specialization, shift and change quickly.*

The superficiality of friendships in modern mobile society is graphically illustrated in the following significant episode :

> A curious thing is our talent for being extremely friendly without saying anything to each other. I remember a conversation between two American businessmen in my office which went like this :
> "Jim ! Where you come from ? I haven't seen you in—I guess it has been about a year and a half...."
> "Just about that, Bill. A year and a half at least."
> "What are you up to, for goodness sake?"
> "I've been in Washington D.C. and now I'm going back overseas."
> "Always on the move !"
> "Well, I guess I am. I just thought I'd come down and have a chat with you before leaving."
> "It's great you did. How's your family?"
> "Fine, Bill. How is yours?"
> "They're fine too."
> "The years go by, don't they?"
> "They sure do!"
> "Well......"
> "Well......"
> "Well, I guess I'd better be moving along."
> "It's been wonderful talking to you, Jim. Look, before you get on the plane, why don't you come down for another talk?"
> "Yes, I will, boy! You can count on that !"**

The unlimited opportunities of mobility brought

*Ibid., pp. 103, 119-120.

***Man Alone ;* Alienation in Modern Society, edited by Eric and Mary Josephson. Dell Publishing Co., New York, 1962, pp. 137-138.

about by mechanized transportation by undermining the foundation of all enduring kinship ties and life-long friendships, wrecks all sense of moral responsibility and integrity of character which for the religious man, is all in this life which really matters. These destructive influences throw wide open the doors for committing delinquent acts of all kinds without any remorse or shame, especially illicit sex.

Each spring an immense lemming-like migration begins all over the eastern United States. Singly and in groups, burdened with sleeping bags, blankets and bathing suits, tens of thousands of American college students toss aside their texts and follow a highly accurate homing instinct that leads them to the sun-bleached beach of Fort Lauderdale, Florida. There for approximately a week, this teeming milling mob of sun and sex-worshippers, swims, sleeps, flirts, guzzles beer, sprawls and brawls on the sands. At the end of this period, the bikini-clad girls and their bronzed admirers pack up their belongings and join the mass exodus out. Anywhere near the booths set up by this resort city to welcome this rambunctious crowd, one can now hear the loudspeaker booming :
"Car with two can take rider as far as Atlanta !"
"Need ride to Washington !"
"Leaving at 10 P.M. for Louisville......"
In a few hours nothing is left of the great beach-and-booze party except thousands of cigarette butts and beer-cans littering the grounds and several million dollars in the cash registers of the local merchants who regard this annual invasion as a tainted blessing that while threatening public sanity, tremendously enhances their private profit.
What attracts the young people to Fort Lauderdale is more than an irrepressible passion for sunbathing. Nor is it mere sex, a commodity easily available elsewhere. Rather *it is a sense of freedoom without responsibility.* In the words of a 19 year-

old New York co-ed who made her way to these festivities recently:
"You're not worried about what you may do or say there because frankly, you'll never see those people again !"
It is just this great diversity of temporary interpersonal relations which is characteristic of moderns as they race further ahead towards super-industrialism.*

This is precisely why saints, sages and seers are non-existent today—for dignity, nobility and virtue must be based on the concept of permanency and tranquility in the social and moral order—qualities conspicuously absent from our mechanized life.

Here is a poignant illustration of the high quality of character which distinguished our ancestors and made Islam the dominant power in the world.

Muhammad Taghlaq left no sons but his first cousin, Firoz Sháh was at once elected in 1351 to the throne of India by the chiefs of the army then fighting in Sind and after defeating the rebels, he had no difficulty making his rule secure. It was characteristic of the merciful and pious disposition of the new king that after burying his cousin with full honours, he then, with tireless energy and patience, sought out the victims of Muhammad Taghlaq's cruelty or if they were dead, their kin and endeavoured as far as he could to make amends for their sufferings and compensate them for their losses. When this was done, he collected the attested documents in which they had admitted the reparation they had received and expressed themselves satisfied. All these papers he himself placed in the grave of the tyrant, After that he prayed to God for forgiveness and begged "Almighty Allah to bestow mercy in the Hereafter to my cousin, my patron and

**Future Shock*, op. cit., pp. 95-96.

and my friend...."[23]

Here is a true portrait of a God-fearing man which would be almost impossible to find in the mechanized West or even the "developing" Muslim countries today. It also exposes the hollow fallacy of "Progress." Rather the quality of human character and human relationships has not at all progressed since the days of Firoz Shah but rather deteriorated to an appalling level.

The amoral scientists and technological experts will not tolerate any limits on their activities. Here are some of the nightmarish horrors technological "Progress" has in store for us :

> Imagine, for example, the implications of biological breakthroughs in what might be terms "birth-technology." Dr. E.S.E. Kefez, an internationally respected biologist at Washington State University, has publically suggested on the basis of his own astonishing work on reproduction that within a mere ten to fifteen years, a woman will be able to purchase a tiny frozen embryo, take it to her doctor, have it implanted in her uterus, carry it for nine months and then give birth to it as through it had been conceived in her own body. The embryo would in effect be sold commercially with the guarantee that the resultant baby would be free of genetic defect. The purchaser would also be told in advance the colour of the baby's eyes and hair, its sex, its probable size at maturity and its probable intelligence quotient. Indeed, it will eventually be possible to do away with the female uterus altogether. Babies will be conceived, nurtured, and raised to maturity outside the female body. It is clearly only a matter of years before the work begun by Dr. N. Daniel Petrucci in Bologna and other scientists in the United States

23. *Medieval India under Mohammadan Rule*, Stanley Lane-Poole, G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1903, p. 141.

and the Soviet Union make it possible for women to have babies without the discomfort of pregnancey. The impact of the new birth technology will shatter to pieces all traditional notions of sexuality, motherhood, maternal love, child-rearing and education.

A fierce controversy is already raging today among biologists over the problems and ethical issues arising out of eugenics. Should we try to bread a superior race? We can now imagine remaking the human race, not as a farmer slowly and laboriously "breeds" his herd of cattle, but as an artist might, employing a brilliant range of unfamiliar colours, shapes and forms. Given our fast-accumulating knowledge of genetics, we shall now be able to breed whole new races of blue-skinned people—or for that matter, green, purple or orange. In a world confronted with the issue of racism, should we now strive for the artificial breeding of all people with the same skin colour? If that is what we want, we shall no doubt soon have the technical means for bringing it about. Or should the biologists work for even greater diversity than now exists? We are hurtling towards the day when we shall be able to breed artificially in the laboratory both inferior and superior races. We shall be able to manufacture *apartheid* scientifically, including humble servants, super-athletes for our games, research scientists with I.Q. 200 and diminutive bodies. We shall have the power to produce races of morons or of mathematical savants. We shall also be able to breed babies with supernormal hearing and vision, super-ability to detect changes in odour or supernormal muscular or musical skills. We will be able to create sexual super-athletes, girls with many mammaries like animals—perhaps even four or five breasts—or only one—and countless other varieties. Human body styles will come and go just like modern clothing fashions.

Mention is now made in scientific journals of breeding men with gills like fish or implanting gills in them for efficiency in underwater environments. Clearly a gibbon is better adapted than a man for life in a space-ship. A platypus with a

prehensile tail is even more so. Gene-grafting may make it possible to incorporate such animal features into human stocks. We are also going to modify man experimentally through physiological and embryological alternations and by the substitution of machines for his various parts, including even the brain. If we want a man without legs for space exploration, we don't have to breed him ; we can just chop them off ; if we want a man with a tail, we will find a way of grafting it on to him.

How would parents like to intervene in the ancient designs of nature for man? Would you like to consult the geneticist on the sex of your offspring? It will be as you wish. Would you like your son to be six feet tall, seven feet, eight feet ? These will be easily handled by us. Even the timeless patterns of growth, maturity and aging will be subjected to our design. We know of no intrinsic limits to the human life-span. How long would you like to live?

Not merely motherhood but the whole concept of parenthood itself is in for a radical revision. Indeed, the day may soon dawn when it is possible for a child to have more than two biological parents. Dr. Beatrice Mintz, a developmental biologist at the Institute for Cancer Research in Philadelphia, has grown in the laboratory what are coming to be known as multi-mice—baby mice each of which has more than the usual number of parents. Embryos are taken from each of the two pregnant mice. Then these embryos are placed in a laboratory dish and nurtured until they form a single growing mass. This is then implanted in the womb of third female mouse. A baby mouse is born that clearly shares the genetic characteristics of both sets of donors. The result is a multi-mouse born of two pairs of parents. If multi-mouse is here, can multi-man be far behind?

If a couple can actually purchase an embryo from the market, then parenthood becomes a legal and not a biological matter. We shall need in the near future a whole new vocabulary to describe these new kinship ties or rather the lack of them.

Furthermore, if human embryos are offered for sale, can a

commercial corporation buy one? Can it buy ten thousand a million? Or can it resell them? And if not a commercial concern, how about a non-commercial research laboratory? If we buy and sell living human embryos like any other commodity, are we back to a new form of slavery? To continue to think of the family of the future in conventional terms is to defy all reason. Faced by rapid social change and the staggering implications of the scientific revolution, super-industrial man may be forced to experiment with novel family-forms.[24]

Thus is the entire human race as we know it, threatened with extinction in the near future by irresponsible, delinquent scientists who, like children playing with dynamite, feel accountable to nothing.

In the three short decades between now (1970) and the twenty-first century, millions of ordinary psychologically normal people will face an abrupt collision with the future. Citizens of the world's richest and most technologically advanced nations, many of them will find it increasingly painful to keep pace with the incessant demands for change that characterizes our time. For them, the future will have arrived too soon.

Western society for the past 300 years has been caught up in in a fire-storm of change. This storm, far from abating, now appears to be gathering force. Change sweeps though the highly industrialized countries with waves of ever-accelerating speed and unprecedented impact. For the acceleration of change brought about by rapid technological innovations does not merely buffet industries or nations. It is a concrete force which reaches deep into our personal lives, compels us to act out new roles and confronts us with the danger of a new and powerfully disturbing mass psychological

24. *Future Shock*, op. cit., pp. 199-202, 240-241.

disease—Future Shock.[25]

The big question all thoughtful, intelligent, educated persons throughout the world are asking: How best can the human being—individually and collectively—adapt to this Change? And anthropologists pose the question: How best can traditional non-European societies adapt themselves to the challenge of modern technology and all its consequences? The answer is simple. *The human race cannot adapt!* Unrestricted technological development is opposed to all the instincts inherent in human beings since God created man. Technology cannot triumph in the future unless the biologists, in their diabolical activities, can destroy the human race or transform mankind into living machines.

> We scientists are creating a new society—not merely a changed society. Not merely an extended or enlarged version of our present society—but an entirely new, unique society which never existed before. Unless and until we understand this, we shall destroy ourselves in trying to cope with Tomorrow. There are indisputable signs of a sick social structure, a society that can no longer perform even its most basic functions in accustomed ways. It is a society caught in the agony of revolutionary Change....
> Biology is marching irresistably towards the day when the astronaut will not merely be buckled into his space-craft but also become an integral part of it. Our aim is to make the spaceship itself a wholly self-sufficient universe in which algae is grown for food, water recovered from body-waste, air is recycled to purge it of the ammonia entering the atmosphere of the craft from urine. In this totally enclosed, fully regenerative world, the human being becomes an integral part of the

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10

on-going micro-ecological process whirling through the vastness of space. Perhaps it would be simpler to provide life support in the form of machines that plug into the astronaut. He can be fed intravenously a liquid food compactly stored in a remote pressurized tank. Perhaps direct processing of liquid body waste into conversion to water could be accomplished by by a new type of artificial kidney built as part of the spaceship and sleep could be induced electronically. One after the other, the body-functions of the human become interwoven with, dependent on and part of the mechanical functions of the capsule......

In quite a different field of robotology, there is great progress too. Technicians at Disneyland in California have created extremely life-like computer-controlled humanoids capable of moving their arms and legs, grimacing, smiling, glowering, simulating fear, joy, laughter, crying, shouting, screaming and a wide range of other emotions. Built of clear plastic that is almost indistinguishable from the texture of human skin, the robots chase girls, play music, fire pistol-shots, and so closely resemble human forms that visitors routinely shriek with fear, flinch and otherwise react as though they were dealing with real human beings. The purposes to which the robots in Disneyland are put may seem trivial but the technology on which they are based is highly sophisticated. It depends heavily on knowledge acquired from the Space Programme and this knowledge is accumulating rapidly

There appears to be no reason why scientists cannot go forward from these primitive and trivial robots to build humanoid machines capable of extremely varied behaviour and to make them indistinguishable from humans except by means of elaborate tests. At that point we shall face the novel experience of trying to determine whether the smiling, assured humanoid behind the airline reservation counter is a pretty girl or a carefully-wired robot.[26]

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 186-185, 210-213.

Fortunately, all of this is still in the realm of science-fiction, however this fiction may threaten to become a reality within the next generation. So much for the "advanced" countries. Now what about the so-called "developing" countries? What do the moral, social, economic and political consequences of the technological revolution have to offer the peoples of Asia and Africa?

If we are to measure the degree of modernization achieved by a given system's distance from its original Islamic base, we may pose the question: which of the two variants of modern government—the democratic or the dictatorship—should be considered as more advanced? The two most publicized endeavours of the military dictatorships in the economic field-namely, the agrarian reform and industrialization—may ultimately prove to have much more a social than an economic significance. The social gain in emancipating the masses of peasantry from traditionalism may have been of such magnitude as to overshadow the economic set-back.

Yet always in human affairs, a price has had to be paid for these advances. In the underdeveloped countries, the price has been felt most in the political sector. The erosion of democratic institutions and the centrialization of power in the hands of those who control the means of coercion (*i.e.*, the army, police and the revolutionary militia) have caused the states to fall into a virtually savage era of the lawlessness of the jungle. While in the case of Egypt under Nasser, the military dictatorship has afforded a reasonably long period of enforced political stability, the dictatorships in Syria and Iraq under the Ba'athist Party, have resulted in a never-ending series of coups, counter-coups and purges which have taken a heavy toll by eliminating group after group of the intelligentsia from constructive work for the society and by producing a climate of uncertainty and violence.

Probably more profound has been the penalty paid in the

> cultural and psychological sectors. Absolute political power has tended not only to corrupt those who wield it but also to produce attitudes and habits of servility, mutual suspicion, character-twisting hypocrisy and evasion from the ever-tightening web of government control among the subjects of such a system. Although the monarchies in traditional Muslim states suffered for many centuries from such negative features, it nevertheless possessed a number of powerful traditional safeguards which mitigated the rigours of despotism and its harmful psychological effects upon the people. Such safeguards are simply non-existent under the modern dictatorships which are steadily and consistently reducing the area of autonomy enjoyed whether by individuals or organizations be they universities, trade-guilds, unions or religions. The press becomes nationalized ; hence even a slim opportunity for independent opinions to be heard which was available under the monarchies—plus strict censorship—is lost. Teaching of the social sciences in the educational institutions, if permitted at all, becomes converted into Marxist indoctrination. History is rewritten according to the requirements of nationalism to suit the needs of the moment. All this is accompanied by increasing glorification over the mass-media of the irrational official mystique mixed with an assertion of the regime's "scientific" approach to socio-economic problems.[27]

Technological society is conducive to totalitarian dictatorship on the one hand and lawlessness, violence and moral anarchy on the other. If everything must be constantly changing all the time in a growing accelerated pace and nothing at all is regarded worthy of preservation from the past, then logically, without any norms, values or objective ethical standards on which to base social life, it is virtually impossible for any govern-

27. *The Conflict of Traditionalism and Modernism in the Middle East*, edited by Carl Leiden, University of Texas Press, Austin, 1966, pp. 60-62.

ment to function. If the Constitution and law of the country enacted yesterday are regarded as obsolete tomorrow and the rising generation refuses to accept authority of any kind, there can be nothing but total anarchy. Laws, even "secular" law, cannot remain law, if they must change every day. And the military, essential for the country's defence against enemy attack, cannot function without strict authority, discipline and the willingness of the soldiers to make personal sacrifices. When people are preoccupied with entertainment and recreation over the mass-media and obtaining the latest comforts and conveniences technology has to offer, they cannot be expected to accept authority, discipline, self-sacrifice and altruism in the face of enemy attack from without or social conflict and disintegration from within. When a people has reached this advanced stage of decay, no technological miracle can save them.

Science as it developed under Muslim rule was far more humane than the science we know today. Here is an autobiographical except from an eminent Persian physician—Burzuyah—who although originally of the Parsi faith, influenced through his association with the great medical research centre at Jundishapur, Muslim doctors by practicing his healing profession in strict conformity with Islamic ethical ideals:

> My father belonged to the soldier class ; my mother was the daughter of a family of distinguished priests. One of the favours that God gave to me was that I was the favourite child and that I received a better education than my brothers. My parents sent me when I was seven years old to an elemen-

tary school. As soon as I could read and write well, I returned to my parents. Then I decided to study Science. The first branch of Science that attracted me was Medicine. It interested me so much because I knew how excellent it was. The more I learnt, of it, the more I liked it and the more eagerly I studied it. As soon as I had reached such a degree of proficiency in medicine that I could think of diagnosing and treating patients, I began to deliberate within myself, for I observed that there were four things to which men aspire. Which of these ought I to aim at—money, prosperity, fame or a heavenly reward? What decided my choice was the observation that all intelligent, educated people praise medicine and that no religion condemns it. I also used to read in the medical books at Jundisapur that the best doctor is the one who sacrifices his personal gain for the welfare of his patients and seeks only a reward from God in the Hereafter. So I was determined to follow this lead and to aim at no earthly gain lest I be like a merchant who sells for a valueless bauble a ruby by which he might have gained all the riches of the world. I also read in the medical works of the ancients that if a physician aspires to gain through his profession a reward in the Hereafter, he will not lose his share in this world's goods. Thus he resembles a sower who carefully scatters his barley grain in his field and for whom there springs up together with his harvest of barley, all sorts of useful herbs.

So with the hope of reward in the Hereafter, I set out to treat the sick. I exerted myself in the treatment of patients whom I expected to cure. And no less did I strive in those cases where I could not hope to effect a cure. In such cases, I tried at least to make their sufferings more bearable. Whenever I could, I used to attend to my cases in person. When this was not possible, I would write out for them the necessary prescriptions and give them medicines. From no one do I ever demand any fee or other reward. And none of my fellow physicians did I envy who equalled me in skill or surpassed me in fame or fortune if he were lax in his standards

of honesty in word or deed.[28]

Contrast these humane ideals with the callous treatment poor patients can expect to be meted out to them in Lahore's hospitals today.

Great numbers of people in Lahore die without receiving any medical attention. Countless unfortunate patients are too poor to consult general pratitioners. The fees doctors demand are so exhorbitant that only the rich can afford to patronize them. And medicines cost ever so much more than the man in the street is able to pay. There are only four big hospitals in Lahore which always remain overcrowded. It is just not possible for the poor to get into any institution established for the care and treatment of the sick and injured as they have neither the money nor the influence to receive treatment at these hospitals. Even those who manage to gain admittance into one of these places, face additional hardships and sufferings. The medicines doctors prescribe have to be purchased by the patients. As most poor folk do not budget for this emergency, they are not in a position to receive medical treatment of any sort. Food served to poor patients is very bad. Vegetables and meat in the hospital kitchens are not even properly washed or cooked. There is nobody in authority to supervise the kitchens. Poor patients needing blood transfusion in urgent surgery cases, more often than not fail to receive the life-giving plasma. Their relations do not come forward to donate blood for them and hospitals have no adequate stocks to cater to the requirements of all patients. Many desperately ill patients lie outside the hospitals on the grounds with nobody to look after them. Some of them eventually die. It is not always possible to establish their identities ; their relatives do not bother about them.[29]

28. *Science and Civilization in Islam*, Syed Hossein Nasr New American Library, New York, 1968, pp. 189-190.

29. 'Many Lahore Patients Die for Want of Medical Aid," *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, April 22, 1974, p. 3.

This is what modern technological civilization means to the common-man in many "developing" countries.

"Until the West interferred, life on the Asiatic continent was fairly well stabilized except for upheavals growing out of the slow fluctuation of climatic changes. The peoples of Asia had developed ways of life ecologically suited to their natural environment and this brought into being some of the world's greatest civilizations producing religion, art, architecture and literature that we in the West cannot claim to have surpassed. One of the most cogent indications of the soundness of these civilizations is their long duration—far longer than any Western society has been able to survive. It is probable that their power to endure lay largely in the *simplicity of their structure.* If one part were destroyed, the rest lived on unperturbed and slowly re-established itself in the devastated area. But modern Western civilization is so complex that if it becomes sick in any of its members, so interdependent are its parts that it may well perish,"[30] "What happened in 1965 during the catastrophic electricity power-failure in New York which lasted for more than twelve hours? Some switches went wrong and the whole system broke down. Multitudes of people trapped inside elevators, underground in the subways, or on the top floors of high-rise buildings were panic-stricken. You couldn't move! You couldn't produce! You couldn't do any work! Now just picture the integrated technological system under which we

30. *The Road to Survival*, op. cit., pp. 212-213.

westerners live. We have an incredibly complicated interdependent organization. Just cut it at a few points (like an Arab oil-embargo) and it's gone! I'm not even talking about the destruction of human life but of the destruction of institutions—a whole civilization! Destruction of human life would follow."[31]

Modern technological civilization conflicts in its aims and ideals not only with Islam and the traditional way of life of the Muslims, but with all the other higher religions of the world and all cultures and civilizations based upon spiritual values. All the higher religions of the world—be it Islam, Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Confucianism or even Hinduism have the following traits in common:

(1) All of them are based upon transcendental theological, ethical and social values. The structure of society and its laws are meant to be stable, if not eternal, at least intended to last a very long time. They are all hostile to innovations which upset the moral and social order. Change when it did occur was gradual and limited in scope. None of them ever upheld Change and indefinite material progress as supreme virtues.

(2) All of them preach the ideal of a simple, chaste life and are implacably opposed to luxury, self-indulgence and extravagance.

(3) All of them uphold the sanctity of human life (and even animal life) and the sanctity of the human personality and abhor the perversion of human

31. *The Environment of Change*, Aaron W. Warner, Dean Morse and Thomas Cooney, Columbia University Press, New York, 1969.

nature for destructive purposes.

(4) All of them seek to preserve and strengthen family and kinship ties and oppose sexual delinquency. All of them uphold the ideals of marital faithfulness and filial obligations to preserve the family structure.

(5) All the higher religions of the world seek to maintain harmony and equilibrium between man and nature.

> In a material sense, the assembly-line shaping, packaging and distributing of persons, of life, occurs already. Most people in technologically advanced countries perch unsteadily in mass-produced impermanent dwellings throughout their lives. We are born in hospitals, fed in cafeterias, married in hotels, after terminal care we die in hospitals, are shelved briefly in funeral homes and are finally incinerated. On each of these occasions—and how many others !—efficiency and economy are obtained and individuality and continuity stripped off. If one lives and dies discontinuously and promiscuously in anonymous surroundings, it becomes hard to identify oneself with anything that is meaningful and worthwhile....[32]

The conclusion is therefore inescapable that the wholesale uncritical adoption of modern science and technology, based as it is upon naked atheism and materialism, can serve only those purposes destructive to our heritage, our culture, our society and our faith.

82. *Man Alone* : Alienation in Modern Society, op. cit., p. 184.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

CRESCENT PUBLISHING CO.

MUMTAZ BUILDING.

2034-35, QASIMJAN STREET,

BALLIMARAN, DELHI-110006.